

Virtua Voorhees Grand Opening

Thank you for inviting me here tonight to share in your celebration.

I am honored to be here with all of you.

On behalf of Governor Chris Christie, I offer my heartfelt congratulations and best wishes as you mark this significant milestone for Virtua Health System and the residents of South Jersey.

It is hard to imagine what is more important to a region than its community hospital. Hospitals are treasured assets and serve as the health care safety net for our most vulnerable citizens. Hospitals are places where our babies enter the world and where our family members go to be healed. They are places where we spend our final moments with loved ones.

Hospitals often are the largest employers in our communities and a major economic engine for our state. They are—like Virtua—places of great innovation, medical breakthroughs and above all—excellence in patient care.

While this new medical campus represents a commitment to state-of-the-art medical technology, the doctors, nurses, pharmacists, lab technicians and other staff who will work here are equally important to the patient experience. Every Virtua employee contributes—from the clerk who checks your ID as you enter the facility to the nurse who prepares you for discharge and sends you home.

When Virtua Voorhees opens its doors next month, it will be the first hospital to open in New Jersey in 7 years. I had a chance to tour the construction site and watch its progress over the last several years.

Virtua's goal was to provide an outstanding patient experience. To do that, they sought input from staff, patients and their families. They visited dozens of new hospitals around the country. They incorporated the management tools of GE, as well as Disney's proven model of customer satisfaction. They even asked new mothers for practical advice on how to improve maternity rooms and included this feedback into the room design.

This hospital is also environmentally conscious, using an internationally recognized green building system to incorporate natural light, outdoor gardens and meditation spaces. Building private rooms throughout the hospital will not only foster dignity, but reduce the risk of patient infection, which is an ongoing challenge for all health care facilities.

These efforts attest to Virtua's commitment to health care excellence.

As Health Commissioner, I recognize the benefits of hospitals in terms of the high-quality care they deliver to patients and the broader economic impact on our state.

Closing

Whether it is building a new facility, incorporating cutting-edge medical technology or promoting health and wellness, Virtua is always working harder to improve patient care.

Residents want superior health care and when they visit this facility, the community will be impressed. The innovative treatments and modern services that this new hospital and its staff will provide will improve patients' lives.

The Department of Health and Senior Services has the highest level of confidence in Virtua's leadership, its health care team and its commitment to the community.

Congratulations as you enter a new era in providing high quality health care to the residents of South Jersey.